



Lexington Division of Police  
Sgt.  
**Billy Richmond**

ABBIE DARST | PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Sgt. Billy Richmond was so eager to become an officer he applied at age 18. Three years later, in June 1990 and just barely 21, he joined the Lexington Division of Police and turned his dream into a dynamic 23-year career. Having served on patrol, Fourth Platoon, homicide and now traffic, his excitement and enthusiasm for his work has never been squelched. Driven by his passion for helping the people of his community, Sgt. Richmond says he is eager to get to work each morning. Richmond is married and has three children, ages 22, 18 and 11.

**There was a homicide, at a trailer park off Gibson Avenue.** I was a training officer, and I contacted my supervisor and said, ‘For training purposes can I take this new officer over?’ They put out ATLs (attempt to locates) on the shooter and other guy. As we’re getting there, guess who we see? We bail out and get in foot pursuit. Several blocks later, I end up catching the shooter. I bring him back to the scene and the sergeant over homicide said ‘I’m going to request that you get transferred over to homicide to work this case.’ I said ‘That’s great, but I don’t want to. I like what I’m doing. Here’s your guy.’ But, lo and behold, I got transferred. I ended up staying for seven years. I had a good run with it. It’s good work.

**People used to ask me with the homicide stuff — how do you do that every day?** How do you keep your sanity? I don’t know, even some of the unpleasant things I can consider favorites because just having the ability to walk in and say to a family, ‘Hey, I have some answers about your loved one.’ It’s not pleasant, but that was something that motivated many of us.

**The supervisor over traffic asked me about coming to the traffic division.** I said, ‘I’m not interested.’ He said, ‘We’ll give you a new Harley.’ And I said, ‘Well, I’ll be there Monday.’ And I’ve been here ever since.

**Now just for straight up fun, the motorcycles are a blast.** Everybody thinks it’s a glamour job — well try it on a freezing winter day, or when it is 100 degrees and you have boots up to your knees. There is nothing glamorous about it. But there are those days when it’s 75 degrees out and you’re in short sleeves

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just kind of breezing down the road and I think, ‘I can’t believe they’re paying me to do this.’

**There is one case that sticks out to me.** A little boy, four months old, was basically beaten to death. I worked that case; I remember his name. He laid up in ICU for a week, and no one came to see him. I would go sit with him every night when I was off duty, and rock him and hold him. He lived seven days. I went and did everything — as a human being, not as a police officer. That is something you don’t walk away from and forget about. I think of that little boy every day. I look at my own kids and think about how grateful I am.

**There are other things like when the firefighter was shot and killed** — Brenda Cowen — I knew Ms. Cowen. I was one of the officers that carried her out. There was nothing we could do for her. That was a very difficult day. Sometimes you don’t recover. You can’t escape it.

**On the flip side, there are some very good things.** When I worked the projects, some of those kids needed just a little kick in the pants, some guidance or just somebody to care. And you make friends with those little guys. I see them now as adults and they run up and remember.

**Our shift would end at 2 a.m. We’d walk the projects from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m.** It was nice to have the overtime, but a lot of us did it because that was when we could catch the bad guys. That’s when we could get the dopers and the guys up to no good. But then I think back to when my little girl was small. I was gone probably 95 percent of the time, even though I was just across town. I wanted to do everything in my life

to make her world better, but her world sometimes was lonely because I wasn’t there to share it with her.

**Sometimes you think you can change the world as a young officer.** And you go out and you do everything possible to change the world. Then as time goes on, you realize you are arresting the same people, answering the same calls, seeing the same things. You have to be able to separate and understand that there is life beyond being a police officer. Now after almost 23 years, I look at the job as I can’t change the world, but when I put this uniform on, I’m going to do everything I can, and do what I’m supposed to do every day. And when I get home, I’m me.

**There are things that we get to do as police officers** that every day, normal people never get to experience. I met President Bush when he came to Lexington for a vacation. I and two other officers got to stand out in the driveway with him for 15 minutes just shooting the breeze. How many people could ever say they met a former president? I’ve met Bill Clinton probably five or more times. He knows me by first name, if that tells you anything.

**Now my little one is a piece of work.** He’s made the comment that he’d like to be a police officer, soldier or Navy Seal. He’s been shooting since he was 5 or 6 years old. Both of my boys love to hunt. He’s very adventurous. Right now, he still likes to play cops and robbers. Matter of fact, he wanted a real set of handcuffs for Christmas. I think he would be my best hold out if we had another officer in the family, and he’d probably be a good one. 🐾

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